

33. NOTES ON *VACCINIUM LESCHENAUHTII*—COMPLEX
(VACCINIACEAE) IN SOUTH INDIA

(With two text-figures)

Wight (1848) described *Vaccinium leschenaultii* based on his collections from the Nilgiris. He remarked, "...leaves shortly petiolated, ovate-elliptic, serrated, acute..." Further, Wight (1850) described another species viz. *V. rotundifolium* from (Kelso cottage) Ceylon, mainly based on the shape of the leaf, "...leaves orbicular, coriaceous, entire or slightly crenulato-serrate..." Later C. B. Clarke (1882) treated this taxon as a variety of *V. leschenaultii*. Subsequently, Gamble (1921) reported this variety from the Nilgiris in his Fl. Pres. Madras. The figure given by Wight (Ill. t. 139. 1850) shows only orbicular leaves all over the branch. While undertaking critical studies on the specimens of *Vaccinium leschenaultii* Wight represented at Madras Herbarium, we came across some interesting specimens [*M. A. Lawson s.n.* (Acc. No. 29181); *Vajravelu* 34923, 43511; *Subbarao* 40440, 41527] bearing both orbicular and ovate-elliptic leaves on the same branch. Hence we doubt whether this variety *rotundifolia* can be kept as a distinct taxon.

It is also observed that some of the specimens (*Collector?* 13450) collected from Neterikal, Tirunelveli Dt. show persistent, leafy bracts as compared to other specimens of *V. leschenaultii* Wight. C. B. Clarke (1882) described var. *zeylanica* based on the presence of persistent, leafy bracts and he recorded this variety only from Ceylon. Hence the present report of its occurrence in Tirunelveli Dt. is of phytogeographical interest and forms a new distributional record for India. We keep this variety as distinct at present, as such a type of persistent, leafy bracts are not at all seen in any of the specimens of *V. leschenaultii* Wight collected from all other areas in South India. However, more field studies coupled with suitable evidences from experimental taxono-

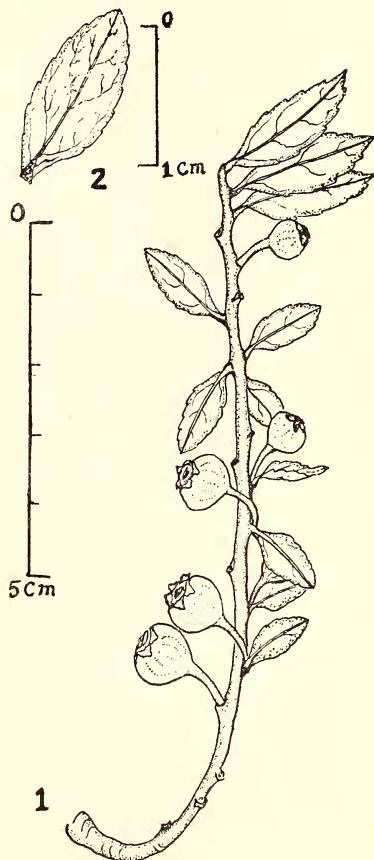


Fig. 1-2. *Vaccinium leschenaultii* Wight var. *zeylanica* C. B. Clarke: 1. Inflorescence showing persistent bracts; 2. Bract.

my can only fix the exact status of this taxon.

KEY TO THE VARIETIES OF *Vaccinium leschenaultii*
WIGHT OCCURRING IN SOUTH INDIA

Bracts up to 1.5 mm broad, lanceolate, not leafy,
deciduous var. *leschenaultii*
Bracts up to 8 mm broad, ovate-elliptic, leafy, per-
sistent var. *zeylanica*

V. leschenaultii Wight var. **leschenaultii**

Wight Ic. 4(1): 5, t. 1188, 1848; Bedd. Fl. Sylv. 3: t. 227. 1872; C. B. Clarke in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. India 3: 455. 1882; Gamble, Fl. Pres. Madras 742. 1921 & 2: 582. 1957 (rep. ed.). *V. leschenaultii* Wight var. *rotundifolia* sensu Gamble, Fl. Pres. Madras 742. 1921 & 2: 522. 1957 (rep. ed.).

Distribution: INDIA. TAMIL NADU: Anamalais, Palnis, Nilgiris, KERALA: Idukki Dt.

V. leschenaultii Wight var. **zeylanica** C. B.

Clarke in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. India 3: 455. 1882; Trimen in Handb. Fl. Ceylon 3: 61.

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34. *CRYPTOLEPIS GRANDIFLORA* WIGHT—A NEW RECORD FOR ANDAMANS

Cryptolepis grandiflora Wight, a specimen collected from South Andaman by S. Kurz; was identified up to the genus. During reorganisation work we noticed the interesting specimen and after critical examination identified it as *Cryptolepis grandiflora* Wight; A review of literature and herbarium specimens available shows that the species is reported from Tamilnadu, Kerala and Karnatak. It is now reported from Andamans.

A short descriptive note is given below:—

Cryptolepis grandiflora Wight; Wight Ic, t. 831; F.B.I. 4: 5, 1883.

Twining glabrous shrubs, flowers in very lax

1895.

Shrubs or small trees, glabrous excepting the tender branches. Leaves 1.5-5.0 × 0.7-2.4 cm, ovate-elliptic, acute or acuminate, serrate, coriaceous, glabrous, shortly petiolate. *Bracts* 0.7-2.2 × 0.3-0.8 cm, leafy, ovate-elliptic, acute, persistent. *Berries* ± 8 mm across, globose, glabrous. (Figs. 1 & 2).

Specimen examined: INDIA: TAMIL NADU: Tirunelveli Dt.: Neterikal, 22 September 1916, *Collector?* 13450.

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slender, few flower axillary or terminal peduncle, calyx with 5 scales within, corolla lobes overlapping, filaments free, anthers acuminate, leaves obovate oblong, obtuse or mucronate at apex, glaucous beneath, 6-8 pairs of nerves arched near the margin.

Specimen examined: Mornur, South India, 2100 ft, 29-10-1906; C.E.C. Fischer 517 (CAL); Papanasam to Mundandurai, Kerala, 18th Feb. 1913, D. Hooper and M. S. Ramaswami 39291 (CAL); Karnatak, G. Thomson s.n. (CAL); *South Andaman*; S. Kurz s.n. (CAL).